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Brazilian Art Today

GRAPHICS

The Arts Council 1965

43

There are a number of paradoxes in the history of Brazilian art, and in particular in its contemporary art. The first is Brazilian baroque—that strange and simplified style—a product of the intense and short-lived gold rush at Minas Gerais and Salvador, then the capital. Throughout the eighteenth century the great monuments were erected : churches and mansions at Ouro Preto, Salvador, Sbará, Congonhas, Paraty and São João d'El Rey. The second is its greatest exponent—José Francisco Lisboa, known as Aleijadinho ('Little Cripple'), the son of a Portuguese foreman and a Negro slave, whose work culminated with the great series of towering prophets at Congonhas. This brief flowering which left its impact on the whole country, like all true paradoxes, obeyed no rules of logic ; having appeared it died away without heirs.

No breath of the revolutionary art movements taking place in Europe, such as romanticism and impressionism, reached Brazil, where, with a few honourable exceptions, painters and sculptors were submerged in the worst academic rut. It was not until 1913 that the first intimations of the modern movement were felt in the country. In that year, Lazer Segall, born in Russia and trained in Germany, held his first exhibition, but it caused little stir despite his reputation among German expressionists. He later made his home in Brazil ; a great artist, whose continuing development was cut short by death in 1957.

Segall was an isolated figure until 1922 when 'The Week of Modern Art' took place. This great artistic explosion was the work of a group of artists, writers and poets mostly from São Paulo who had lived in Paris and returned home to put what they had learned into practice.

Thereafter it became more common for artists to travel to Europe and, for example, Goeldi and Guignard returned to participate in the artistic life of their country. The work of Portinari began to be widely known and books on modern Brazilian architecture were published. Many foreign artists arrived as a result of the second world war and museums of modern art, such as those in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, were founded. The first São Paulo Bienal took place in 1951.

It is curious that although Brazil is a country of great economic and social contrasts and many of the artists are politically committed, so-called 'social realism' has never been successful as an art form. Similarly, despite their imaginative powers and sensitivity, there are no important Brazilian surrealists ; those whose work might be so described are more akin to Bosch and Goya than to their twentieth-century colleagues.

Again paradoxically, the rich and varied folklore of the country with its many racial influences has little effect on contemporary art, although works in a 'primitive' style sell well. There are of course some authentic primitives but many are the product of critics and dealers. However, this is not to say that painters such as Portinari, Guignard, Goeldi, Pancetti, Djanira, and perhaps Di Cavalcanti in his work of twenty years ago, have not included something specifically Brazilian in their work and have not been able to incorporate native elements in a truly universal style. But perhaps the greatest paradox of all is the enormous importance today of etching and engraving. After rather timid beginnings by Carlos Oswald and Oswaldo Goeldi, helped by the Austrian Axel von Leskoschek, and later by Johnny Friedlander, Orlando da Silva, etc., a group of etchers and engravers was formed which has acquired international standing. Artists like Faygo Ostrower, Roberto De Lamonica, Artur Luiz Pisa, Marcelo Grassmann, Edith Behring and several others have a well-deserved international reputation. Brazil is an exuberant country with an exuberant nature, and yet her most important art-form today is probably in the severe and unadorned beauty of the graphic arts.

The exhibition organised by the Royal College of Art, with the full support of the Brazilian Government, is the first one of its size to be held in Great Britain. It is intended to be representative of what is happening in Brazil today, and for this reason the work of artists who are dead, or whose work is not in accord with the contemporary spirit, has not been

included. The only theme has been that of liveliness and an attempt to capture the Brazilian spirit.

There are some artists of importance such as Maria Leontina, Milton Dacosta and Alfredo Volpi who did not submit work for reasons of their own, and their absence can be felt.

The graphic artists speak for themselves. It is obvious that most of them have mastered their complex and difficult craft whether they work in metal, wood or draw on stone. Some of them are still carried away by the virtuosity of the technique, others are producing works of great depth and seriousness. It is my belief that this is the most important and interesting part of the exhibition.

Nor do the draughtsmen fall behind ; they represent the most varied trends and techniques and have reached a high level of accomplishment.

It was difficult to select the true primitives, and in any case their work does not require comment.

Like the art of the United States, that of Brazil is the result of a conglomeration of races and nationalities : Japanese, Hungarian, Poles, Italians, Spaniards, Germans and others have, between them, created an art that is full of vitality, strength and personality. They have digested their inheritance from Portuguese, Indian and Negro forebears, and are about to produce work of international impact, yet very much their own. They understand how to make use of the many paradoxes of their development and are trying to say something that is worth saying.

Marc BERKOWITZ
Rio de Janeiro
June 1964

Acknowledgements

This exhibition results from a visit made to Brazil by Sir Robin Darwin, Principal of the Royal College of Art, in 1963, when he was particularly impressed by the achievement of modern Brazilian artists, especially in the graphic field. Professor Carel Weight later visited Brazil as guest of the Brazilian Government, to select the painting and graphic work for the proposed exhibition held at the Royal College of Art in February and March of this year. The Arts Council welcomed the opportunity to show the graphic section of the exhibition in a number of centres outside London and we would like to thank Sir Robin Darwin and the staff at the Royal College of Art for making this possible. We would also like to thank the Brazilian Government who have sponsored and organised the exhibition and in particular Counsellor Mario Dias Costa and Dr Rosalina Leao, of the Cultural Relations Department of the Brazilian Foreign Office, and Sr G. E. do Nascimento e Silva, the Brazilian Chargé d'Affaires in London. Mr J. A. Cayton, British Council representative in Rio de Janeiro, has worked untiringly on behalf of the exhibition and we are very grateful for all his help. Lastly we would like to thank Sr Marc Berkowitz, who advised on the selection, and whose introduction to the complete exhibition at the Royal College of Art is reprinted here. G.W.

Antonio Henrique AMARAL
b.1935, São Raulo
Studied in Brazil and New York

1 Camilla was working
Gouache 1963
24in × 18¾in/61cm × 48cm

2 Dialogue of Madmen
Gouache 1963
27½in × 19¾in/69cm × 49cm

Maciej BABINSKI
b.1931, Warsaw
Studied in England, France and Canada; arrived in Brazil in 1953

3 Urban Landscape with Figure
Ink and wash 1964
25in × 19in/64cm × 48cm

4 Urban Landscape
Ink and wash 1964
25in × 19in/64cm × 48cm

5 Head
Ink and wash 1964
25in × 19in/64cm × 48cm

Dora BASILIO
b.1923, Rio de Janeiro
Studied at Rio de Janeiro

6 Cremona
Aquatint/aqua fortis/dry point
1964
19½in × 11¾in/50cm × 30cm

7 Compasses No.1
Aquatint/aqua fortis/dry point
1964
23in × 11¾in/60cm × 30cm

8 Compasses No.2
Aqua fortis 1964
23in × 11¾in/60cm × 30cm

Edith BEHRING
b.1917, Rio de Janeiro
Studied in Rio de Janeiro and Paris; teaches engraving at the Rio de Janeiro Museum of Modern Art and the Institute of Fine Arts at Guanabara

9 'No.I'
Aquatint 1962
23½in × 7¾in/60cm × 20cm

10 'No.II'
Aquatint 1962
23½in × 7¾in/60cm × 20cm

11 'No.III'
Aquatint 1963
23½in × 7¾in/60cm × 20cm

12 'No.IV'
Aquatint 1961
17¾in × 18in/45cm × 46cm

13 'No.V'
Aquatint 1964
12¾in × 18¾in/33cm × 48cm

Helena Maria BELTRÃO DE BARROS
b.1937, Brazil
Studied in Rio de Janeiro

14 Flock in the North-East No. I
Gouache 1963
18¾in × 26¾in/48cm × 70cm

15 Flock in the North-East No. II
Gouache 1963
18¾in × 26¾in/48cm × 70cm

Maria BONOMI
b.1935, Italy
Studied in São Paulo, in Italy and USA; co-founder of Studio Gravura in São Paulo

16 Encounter
Woodcut
47½in × 40in/122cm × 102cm

17 Picture
Woodcut
47½in × 40in/122cm × 102cm

18 'Préamar'
Woodcut
43in × 40in/112cm × 102cm

Newton CAVALCANTI
b.1930, Pernambuco
Studied in Rio de Janeiro

19 The Violinist and the Muse
Wood engraving 1963
13¾in × 6⅛in/33cm × 14cm

20 The Mysterious Duck
Wood engraving 1963
7½in × 11¾in/18cm × 30cm

21 Fantastic Theme
Wood engraving 1963
9½in × 20½in/23.5cm × 51cm

Italo CENCINI
b.1925, São Paulo
Studied in São Paulo

22 Drawing
Ink on yellow paper 1959
26in × 10in/66cm × 25cm

23 Drawing
Ink on yellow paper 1960
13⅜in × 18⅝in/34cm × 47cm

24 Drawing and collage
Ink 1963
9¾in × 13¾in/24cm × 35cm

25 Drawing and collage
Ink 1963
9¾in × 13¾in/24cm × 35cm

Miriam CHIAVERINI
b.1940, Brazil
Studied in São Paulo

26 'No. I'
Mixed wood engraving 1963
31in × 22¾in/80cm × 57cm

27 'No.II'
Mixed wood engraving 1963
32½in × 17¾in/84cm × 45cm

DAREL (Darel Valença Lins)
b.1924, Pernambuco
Studied at Recife and Rio de Janeiro

28 Topography
Pen and ink and charcoal 1963
17¾in × 22in/45cm × 55cm

29 Crowd I
Pen and ink wash 1964
17¾in × 22in/45cm × 55cm

30 Crowd II
Pen and ink wash 1964
17¾in × 22in/45cm × 55cm

Roberto DE LAMONICA
b.1933, Brazil
Studied in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Visiting Professor at Minneapolis Art School

31 'No. 46'
Metal engraving 1962
4in × 30¾in/10cm × 78.5cm

32 'No. 49'
Metal engraving 1962
4in × 30¾in/10cm × 78.5cm

33 'No. 52
Metal engraving 1963
12in × 11½in/30cm × 29cm

34 'No. 53'
Metal engraving 1963
13½in × 13½in/34cm × 34cm

35 'No. 56'
Metal engraving 1963
9¾in × 23½in/24cm × 59cm

Wesley DUKE LEE
b.1931, São Paulo
Studied in São Paulo, New York and in Europe

36 Study for the Embryo of a Leader
Drawing ; bitumen and charcoal 1962
19in × 26½in/50cm × 67cm

37 The Beginning, or Where the Leader did come from
(Part 1 and Part 2)
Bitumen pencil 1963
20in × 55in/51cm × 142cm

38 First of April
Drawing, distemper and collage 1964
19in × 26½in/49cm × 67cm

Farnese DE ANDRADE
b.1926, Minas Gerais
Studied at Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro

39 Engraving I
Aquatint/aqua fortis/relief 1963
13½in × 19½in/34cm × 49cm

40 Engraving II
Aquatint/aqua fortis/relief 1963
23in × 11¾in/58cm × 30cm

41 Engraving III
Aquatint/aqua fortis/ relief 1964
11⅝in × 19½in/30cm × 50cm

42 Engraving IV
Aquatint/aqua fortis/relief 1964
11⅝in × 19⅝in/30cm × 50cm

43 Engraving V
Aquatint/aqua fortis/relief 1964
19¼in × 13½in/48cm × 34cm

Anna Bella GEIGER
b.1933, Rio de Janeiro
Studied in Rio de Janeiro

44 'No. 9'
Aquatint/relief 1962
16½in × 13¾in/42cm × 34cm

45 'No. 14'
Aquatint/relief 1963
11⅝in × 19½in/29cm × 48cm

Wilson GEORGES (Nacif)
b.1946, Rio de Janeiro

46 Still Life No. 13
Wood engraving 1963
11⅝in × 21¼in/29cm × 54cm

47 Still Life No. 15
Wood engraving 1963
11⅛in × 21⅝in/28cm × 52cm

Marcelo GRASSMANN
b.1925, São Paulo

48 '1'
Metal engraving 1963
12¾in × 19in/33cm × 49cm

49 '2'
Metal engraving 1963
12¾in × 19½in/33cm × 49.5cm

50 '3'
Metal engraving 1964
15½in × 23in/40cm × 58cm

Hermano José GUEDES
b.1929, Paraiba
Studied in Rio de Janeiro

51 Metal engraving 1962
11¾in × 20in/30cm × 51.5cm

52 Metal engraving 1962
11½in × 7½in/28.5cm × 19cm

53 Metal engraving 1963
23½in × 16½in/59.5cm × 42cm

54 Metal engraving 1963
21in × 16in/53cm × 40.5cm

Fernando LEMOS
b.1926, Lisbon
Studied in Portugal and went to Brazil in 1953

55 Series I, No. 5
Ink 1959
38¾in × 27¼in/99cm × 69cm

56 Series I, No. 2
Ink 1961
38¾in × 27¼in/99cm × 69cm

57 Series III, No. 2
Ink 1961
38¾in × 27¼in/99cm × 69cm

Roberto MAGALHÃES
b.1940, Rio de Janeiro
Largely self-taught

58 A Woman
Xylograph/wood engraving 1964
11¾in × 11¾in/30cm × 30cm

59 The Fish and the Fisherman
Xylograph/wood engraving 1964
11¾in × 11¾in/30cm × 30cm

60 A Couple at the Races
Xylograph 1964
11¾in × 11¾in/30cm × 30cm

61 A Human Being
Xylograph/wood engraving 1964
11¾in × 11¾in/30cm × 30cm

Walter Gomes MARQUES
b.1934, Rio de Janeiro
Studied in Rio de Janeiro; now teaching at Museum of Modern Art there

62 Engraving No. 14
Relief/aquatint/aqua fortis 1962
23½in × 13in/59.5cm × 33.5cm

63 Engraving No.7
Relief/aquatint/aqua fortis 1963
21¾ × 7¾/55.5cm × 20cm

Aldemir MARTINS
b.1922, Ingazeiras
Self-taught

64 Uirapurú
Pen, wash and coffee 1964
30½in × 21½in/76cm × 55cm

65 Cuñana
Pen, wash and coffee 1964
30½in × 21½in/76cm × 55cm

66 Lacemaker
Pen, wash and coffee 1964
30½in × 21½in/76cm × 55cm

Vera Bocayuva MINDLIN
b.1922, Rio de Janeiro
Studied in Paris and Brazil

67 Mirror
Metal engraving 1962
7¾in × 11½in/20cm × 29cm

68 Mirror
Metal engraving 1962
12⅜in × 5⅜in/31cm × 14cm

69 Mirror
Metal engraving 1962
7¾in × 11½in/20cm × 29cm

Fayga OSTROWER
b.1920, Lodz, Poland
Lived in Germany; moved to Brazil in 1934. Now teaches at Museum of Modern Art, Rio de Janeiro

70 'No. 6002'
Coloured wood engraving 1960
23½in × 35½in/60cm × 90cm

71 'No. 6004'
Coloured wood engraving 1960
23½in × 35¼in/60cm × 90cm

72 'No. 6102'
Coloured wood engraving 1961
23½in × 35½in/60cm × 90cm

73 'No. 6104'
Coloured wood engraving 1961
15¾in × 23½in/40cm × 60cm

74 'No. 6106'
Coloured wood engraving 1961
16¾in × 23½in/40cm × 60cm

Rossini PEREZ
b.1932, Rio Grande do Norte
Studied at Rio de Janeiro and Amsterdam; lives in Paris

75 The Dive
Aquatint and relief 1963
11½in × 28in/29cm × 71cm

76 The Underworld
Aquatint and relief 1963
9¾in × 14½in/25cm × 37cm

77 Disbandment
Aquatint and relief 1963
6½in × 12in/16.5cm × 30.5cm

78 Starting Corner
Aquatint and relief 1964
11¾in × 16¾in/30cm × 43cm

Isabel PONS
b.1912, Barcelona
Studied in Barcelona and Rio de Janeiro

79 Great Personage
Metal engraving 1961
13½in × 19½in/35cm × 50cm

80 Blue II
Metal engraving 1962
15½in × 19½in/40cm × 50cm

81 Imaginary Gate
Metal engraving 1964
19½in × 15½in/50cm × 35cm

Moacyr ROCHA
b.1929, São Paulo
Studied in Brazil

82 'No.1'
Metal engraving 1963
23¾in × 13¾in/60cm × 35cm

83 'No.2'
Metal engraving 1963
23¾in × 11½in/60cm × 30cm

Marilia RODRIGUES
b.1937, Minas Gerais
Studied in Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro

84 Engraving I
Dry point/relief/aquatint 1963
13½in × 17in/34cm × 43cm

85 Engraving II
Dry point/relief/aquatint 1963
19½in × 13½in/49cm × 33cm

Rita ROSENMAYER
b.1932, Rio de Janeiro

86 Figure No. I
Chalk drawing 1960
27½in × 19¾in/70cm × 50cm

87 Figure No. II
Chalk drawing 1960
27½in × 19¾in/70cm × 50cm

José Assumpção de SOUZA
b.1924, Pernambuco
Studied in Rio de Janeiro

88 Metal engraving 1962
7½in × 15¾in/19cm × 39.5cm

89 Metal engraving 1962
13½in × 23½in/34.5cm × 59.5cm

90 Metal engraving 1962
15¼in × 23½in/39cm × 59.5cm

91 Metal engraving 1963
10in × 15¾in/25cm × 39.5cm

José SUZUKI
b.1935, Brazil
Studied at São Paulo

92 'A'
Drawing 1964
38in × 26in/96cm × 60cm

93 'B'
Drawing 1964
38in × 26in/96cm × 60cm

94 'C'
Drawing 1964
38in × 26in/96cm × 60cm

Zita VIANA de Barros
b. São Paulo
Studied at São Paulo

95 Metal engraving 1963
11¾in × 11¾in/30cm × 30cm

Abelardo ZALUAR
b.1924, Brazil
Studied at Rio de Janeiro

96 Ink 1964
19½in × 27½in/50cm × 70cm

97 Ink 1964
19½in × 27½in/50cm × 70cm

98 Ink 1964
23¾in × 27½in/60cm × 70cm

Anna LETYCIA (Quadros)
b. 1929, Brazil
Studied in Rio de Janeiro ; lives in Italy

99 Engraving 1
1961
18in × 13in/45.5cm × 33.5cm

100 Engraving 2
1962
18in × 6¼in/45.5cm × 16cm

101 Engraving 3
1962
18in × 13in/45.5cm × 33.5cm

102 Engraving 4
1963
17in × 20in/42cm × 50cm

103 Engraving 5
1963
16in × 19½in/42cm × 50cm

104 Engraving 6
1964
14in × 9¾in/35cm × 25cm

Arthur Luiz PIZA
b. 1928, São Paulo
Studied at São Paulo ; lives in Paris

105 Engraving 1
16in × 10¼in/40cm × 27cm

106 Engraving 2
22in × 18in/56cm × 44cm

107 Engraving 3
15¾ × 10½in/40.5cm × 27cm

108 Engraving 4
22in × 16½in/55cm × 42cm

All the works are for sale ; prices on application